

Abstract of the Disclosure

Disclosed are methods for producing fusion proteins with the heterodimeric cytokine, interleukin-12. In order to insure that the proper ratio of fused and non-fused subunits are obtained in the fusion protein, a specific stepwise approach to genetic engineering is used. This consists of first expressing the non-fused p40 IL-12 subunit in a production cell line, followed by or simultaneously expressing in the same cell, a second recombinant fusion protein consisting of the fused polypeptide linked by a peptide bond to the p35 subunit of IL-12. Molecules containing the p35 fusion protein cannot be secreted from the transfected mammalian cell without first complexing in a one to one ratio with the p40 subunit, thus ensuring the production of active heterodimeric fusion proteins.

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